

**ABSTRACT**

Articles having irregular characteristics such as an irregular geometrical configuration or an irregular density are disposed in a container which is moved in a first direction past a radiation source. Radiation from the source is directed toward the articles in the container in a second direction substantially perpendicular to the first direction. The radiation energy passing from the source to the articles at different positions in the articles is absorbed in accordance with the irregularities in the characteristics of the articles at the different positions to maintain the radiant energy at the different positions in the articles within particular limits. For irregularities of geometrical configuration or density in the articles, the absorption may be provided during the movement of the container in the first direction with a fixture which has a geometrical configuration or density constituting the difference at every position between a substantially constant value and the geometrical configuration or density of the articles at this position. The fixture is disposed externally relative to the container.